28th January 1929]

Appendix IX.

[Vide answer to question No. 1059 asked by Mr. T. Adinarayana Chettiyar at the meeting of the Legislative Council held on the 28th January 1929, page 60 supra.]

From the Collector of North Arcot, dated the 8th December 1928, *No. R.O.C. F-2-14735*/28.

There is a small temple in S. No. 227 classed unassessed waste and measuring 13·25 acres of Santhavasal village, Polur taluk. The temple in question known as 'Paliamman temple' consists of two rooms constructed on a rock 12′ above the ground level reached by a flight of steps. One room is used as temple and the other as a resting place by the people who stay there at nights during the festival season. The two rooms cover an area of 624 square links which is less than one cent.

The temple is no doubt an old one and worshippers resort to it in large numbers on festival occasions. On ordinary days only 4 or 5 persons are said to attend the temple for worship. A pujari appointed by the villagers (people of Santhavasal) renders service in the temple, performing pooja and lighting. In the months of March, April, a festival is conducted for 15 days and the expenditure is met from public subscriptions in the village.

2. (*a*) It is proposed to enlarge the temple at a cost of Rs. 1,000. This has to be raised by subscriptions alone; no attempt has yet been made to raise it and there is little or no money on hand at present to start the work.

(*b*) With the object of reconstructing the temple the villagers of their own accord quarried in January last 83 cart-loads of cut stones in the same field without obtaining a permit from the tahsildar as required by rules. This was brought to notice and the assistant tahsildar then working in that taluk inspected the site and found that the quarrying was for the reconstruction of the temple and that there was no dishonesty since an application for permit to quarry stones had been sent to the tahsildar through the village munsif a few days previously. It may be mentioned here that mere application was not sufficient; the villagers should have waited until they received formal permission to quarry and should have paid the seigniorage due on the metal quarried.

(*c*) The assistant tahsildar directed, therefore, that seigniorage fees at 2 annas per cart-load or Rs. 10–6–0 for 83 cart-loads quarried should be paid by Krishna Goundan and two others who were responsible for the quarrying and ordered that if the amount was not paid steps would be taken to prosecute them for quarrying without actually obtaining a permit and that a permit should be obtained beforehand, if further quarrying for the temple was desired. It is against this order that the ryots feel aggrieved.

(*d*) S. No. 227 is solely at the disposal of Government. The State has full right to minerals in it. The temple in question though situated in it occupies only a cent out of the total extent of 13·25 acres as stated above. If it is to be reconstructed on a larger extent previous permission of Government is necessary for the occupation of additional area. Under Board's Standing Order No. 25, paragraph 19 (4), the public may be allowed to quarry free of charge in lands at the disposal of Government for bona fide domestic or agricultural purposes; quarrying for other than bona fide domestic or agricultural purposes is subject to payment of seigniorage fees. The quarrying in this case is for the construction of a temple and it cannot under the rules be allowed free of charge. The levy of seigniorage fees of Rs. 10–6–0 for 83 cart-loads by the tahsildar is, I submit, quite proper. The field or any portion of it was at no time classed as temple poramboke.

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